

REMARKS

Pursuant to the non-final Office Action mailed September 3, 2008, which has been carefully considered, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration. To further the prosecution of this application, each of the issues raised in the Office Action is addressed herein.

Claims 10, 13-17, and 19-26 are currently pending, of which Claim 10, 19, 23, 25, and 26 are independent claims. By this amendment Claim 10 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of Claim 11 and the allowable subject matter of Claim 12, Claim 19 has been added to recite the subject matter of Claims 10-11 and to incorporate the allowable subject matter of Claim 13, Claim 23 has been added to recite the subject matter of Claims 10-11 and to incorporate the allowable subject matter of Claim 14, Claim 25 has been added to recite the subject matter of Claims 10-11 and to incorporate the allowable subject matter of Claim 15, and Claim 26 has been added to recite the subject matter of Claims 10-11 and to incorporate the allowable subject matter of Claim 16. Accordingly, Claims 11 and 12 have been canceled. Claims 1-9 and 18 have also been canceled to expedite prosecution, although Applicants reserve the right to pursue claims 1-9 and 18 in a divisional application. The application as presented is believed to be in allowable condition.

A. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants note with appreciation that Claims 12-16 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, while not acceding to the propriety of any claim rejections over prior art set forth in the Office Action, Applicants have rewritten the claims to accept the subject matter deemed allowable by the Examiner so as to expedite prosecution of this application towards allowance.

Specifically, independent Claim 10 has been rewritten to incorporate Claim 11 and the allowable subject matter of Claim 12. Accordingly, Claims 11 and 12 have been canceled. Claim 19 has been added to recite the subject matter of Claims 10 and 11, and to incorporate the allowable subject matter of Claim 13. Claim 23 has been added to recite the subject matter of Claims 10 and 11, and to incorporate the allowable subject matter of Claim 14. Claim 25 has been added to recite the subject matter of Claims 10 and 11, and to incorporate the allowable subject matter of Claim 15. Claim 26 has been added to recite the subject matter of Claims 10 and 11, and to incorporate the allowable subject matter of Claim 16.

B. Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 12-16 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Applicants have amended Claims 13-16 to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the Applicant regards as the invention. Likewise, the subject matter of Claim 12, now incorporated into independent Claim 10, has been rewritten to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the Applicant regards as the invention. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of Claims 12-16 under 35 U.S.C. § 112.

C. Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 10, 11, and 17 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over U.S. Patent No. 2,806,277 (*Hand*) in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,482,406 (*Schuppisser*). Applicants submit that the rejection of Claims 10, 11, and 17 have been rendered moot by the amendments submitted herein. Applicants do not concede that the foregoing rejections are proper, and reserve the right to file one or more related applications directed to the subject matter of the claims prior to the amendments herein. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that the

Applicants: Seo et al.
Serial No.: 10/534,521
Filing Date: May 11, 2005
Docket No.: 673-27 PCT/US
Reply to Non-Final Office Action mailed September 3, 2008
Page 10

rejection of Claims the rejection of Claims 10, 11, and 17 under 35 U.S.C. §103 be reconsidered and withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

Entry of the amendments to Claims 10 and 13-17; favorable consideration of Claims 10 and 13-17, as amended; entry of new Claims 19-26; favorable consideration of new Claims 19-26; and allowance of pending claims 10, 13-17, and 19-26 are solicited.

In view of the foregoing remarks, the subject application should now be in condition for allowance. A notice to this effect is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes, after this Reply, that the application is not in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the Applicants' attorney at the telephone number provided below to discuss any outstanding issues.

Respectfully submitted,

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